

As you may know, the U.S. Senate has cleared the way to pass its version of health care legislation before Christmas.

Many Nebraskans are disappointed. The Senate process involved late night votes and special deals. The Senate bill is very complex and very costly with significant tax implications. According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicare Services, it could mean substantial increases in coverage premiums for families.

Most of us expected more bipartisan, independent leadership. Rather than an open, cooperative discussion of how best to strengthen our health care system, recent negotiations lacked both transparency and bipartisanship. If the Senate bill is passed this week, the next step is a House-Senate conference to reconcile both versions early next year.

I continue to believe that any true reform must meet the three-fold test of reducing costs, improving health outcomes, and protecting vulnerable persons. We can do better for Nebraska's families and the American people. For a fuller perspective of my position on this important issue, please read the Fort Report titled ["The House Health Care Bill"](#) located on this website.

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